

Winter? Mercury Hits 84 Degrees

MILLWORKER CRUSHED TO DEATH

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New Census 'Guesstimate' Puts Population at 35,102

Meters Used In New Count

Latest "guesstimate" of the number of persons living in Torrance, based on the number of electrical meters, indicates the population of the city to be 35,102.

According to figures supplied by Lew Jenkins, district manager of the Southern California Edison Company, there were 10,573 domestic meters installed in the City of Torrance as of Jan. 1 of this year.

Calculating Population
City officials arrive at a population figure by multiplying the number of meters by 3.32. It was discovered that according to the census figures of last year there were 3.32 persons living in Torrance for each electrical meter.

Edison Co. officials, however, use a factor of 3.6 to determine population estimates. Using this figure Torrance would have a population of 38,062.

Waiting for Figures
City Manager George W. Stevens had been waiting for the Edison Co. report before recommending to the council a special census. Although Stevens was not available to comment on these latest Edison Co. figures, he said earlier this week that it would be "wishful thinking" to hope for a population of 40,000 at this time.

Stevens and other city officials are watching the State Legislature to see what happens to a proposed bill creating a municipal court for cities of 40,000 or more.



NEW REALTY BOARD . . . This, the first "family portrait" of the 1953 Board of Directors of the Torrance-Lomita Realty Board, was snapped following installation ceremonies Saturday night. Seated (left to right) are: Edith S. Smith, Howard J. Percy, incoming president; C. J. "Paddy" Ryan, retiring president; and Perry L. Connett, treasurer. Standing are W. E. Bowen, Gretchen M. Earle, H. W. Peterson, Elmer H. Epperson and H. B. Bowker.

Percy Accepts Realty Gavel

A gavel, symbol of authority, was handed to Howard J. Percy, incoming president of the Torrance-Lomita Realty Board, by R. J. "Paddy" Ryan, retiring president, at installation rites conducted in the YWCA building Friday night.

Ryan, an ex-Marine, completing two years as president of the board was presented a past-president's pin for his servitude and a gold pen and pencil set for services "above and beyond the call of duty."

Installed with Percy was the new Board of Directors including Edith S. Smith, vice-president; Perry L. Connett, secretary-treasurer; W. E. Bowen, H. B. Bowker, G. M. Earle, Elmer H. Epperson, H. V. Peterson, and Ryan, all directors.

The installing officer was Howard Towle, regional vice-president of the 21st District of the California Real Estate Assn.

Mayor Mervin M. Schwab spoke briefly about the future growth of Torrance and the aims of those who would be helping it grow. The response was given by Joe Mongini of the Torrance Escrow Guaranty Co.

Connett, returned as treasurer of the organization, stated in his report that the realty board is now worth more than \$7000 including investments, cash and other assets.

"The number of building permits issued since the last census of Jan. 25, 1952, does not indicate we have gained 8000 more in the last 12 months. I soon will have a count of the electric meters installed in the City of Torrance. I am quite certain this number will tally with our present calculations in showing we have not as yet reached the 40,000 mark," he stated.

"However, as soon as there are enough indications that we have reached a population of 40,000 I will ask the council for a special census, but I cannot

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR RITES SET

Services for Donald Edward Blasdel, 55, personnel director of Domanco Co., who died of a heart attack at his home on Thursday, will be conducted at 2 p.m. tomorrow at the Price-Daniel Mortuary, 11567 Santa Monica Blvd.

Mr. Blasdel died while shaving at his home, 2276 Pelham Ave.

He had been personnel director of the local aviation parts manufacturing firm since 1951. He originally joined the firm in 1942, leaving after three years. He had long been associated in personnel work with aviation firms, having been employed by North American, Douglas, and Lockheed aircraft companies.

He was a former member of the Torrance Rotary Club and a veteran of many years in the Army.

Surviving is his widow, Octavia.

He had been a resident of Los Angeles for 32 years.

Interment will be in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Columbia Worker Crushed

Crushed under a heavy steel tool locker at Columbia Steel Friday morning was 57-year-old Henning W. Backstrom of 811 Cofo Ave., an employee of the firm for 25 years. He was pronounced dead on arrival at Santa Fe Hospital.

Mr. Backstrom's death was the first fatal industrial accident at the plant since Robert Blankenship was killed in July, 1948.

Mr. Backstrom, along with coworkers Fowler, F. W. Featherolf, Jessie Dodson, Harry Horridge, and W. W. Weiler were moving the huge locker Friday morning when it slipped off the blocks supporting it and tipped over onto the victim.

Record Ended
He was rushed to Torrance Memorial Hospital for emergency treatment, then transferred to Santa Fe. His father-in-law, Hugh Ekersley, of 711 Columbia Pl., accompanied him to the hospital. His death ended a safety record at the plant which had reached 3,500,000 man-hours without a time-lost accident.

Mr. Backstrom and his father-in-law came to Torrance together 25 years ago and went to work in the mill.

Mr. Backstrom leaves his widow, Ruby, and two children, a daughter, Mrs. Dorothy Leatnerman, and a son, Monte Jay Backstrom.

He also leaves a granddaughter, five sisters, and one brother.

Ardent Angler
He was a life member of the American Legion and a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. An ardent angler, he spent his vacations prowling the shores of California's lakes and streams with his fishing tackle.

Funeral services for the veteran steelworker will be held Wednesday at 2 p.m. in the Stone and Myers Chapel here.

Rev. G. M. Northrup of the First Baptist Church will officiate. Burial will be in Green Hills Cemetery.



HENNING BACKSTROM . . . Steelworker Dies

Station Owners Checking Signs

Owners of the Walco Self-Service station at Carson St. and Western Ave. were looking at their "help yourself" signs with a critical eye yesterday.

Someone dropped in and helped himself to \$161 in currency and \$950 in negotiable checks, David H. Fuller, partner in the firm, told Torrance police Friday evening.

The money and checks were slipped through a slot in the floor safe provided for that purpose, Fuller said. The money and checks were taken from the floor safe.

Fuller fixed the time of the theft between 8 p.m. Jan. 4 and 9 a.m. Jan. 5, he told police.

City Ninth In Line For Armory

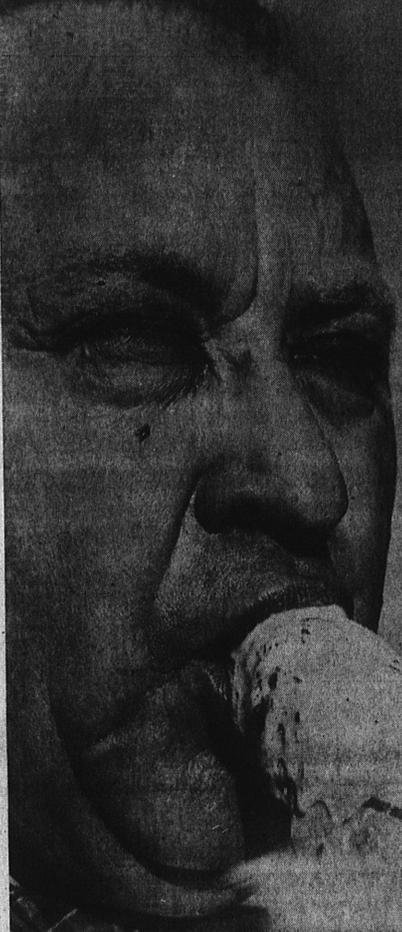
Allocation Upped To \$157,000 For Guard Building

The City of Torrance is now ninth in line for a National Guard Armory, the requested allocation for which has been upped from \$52,000 to \$157,000, according to Assemblyman Vincent Thomas in Sacramento.

Assemblyman Thomas told the Herald Saturday that he had been informed by the Adjutant General's office that the department has recommended the construction of 15 armories in the proposed state budget and that Torrance holds the ninth position.

The state now holds a conditional deed to a triangle plot of land north of the City Park on Cabrillo Ave. The state is asking the City Council of Torrance to renew the deed since the present agreement terminates in March.

Originally budgeted for a Torrance armory was \$52,233.



REAL HOT REAL ESTATE . . . Broker Joe Burton chops into an ice cream cone in attempt to beat yesterday's 84-degree January heat wave. The weatherman says it will be warm again today, but not quite so warm. Around 78 degrees, he says.

Redondo Reaching For 'Our' Territory

Redondo Beach is about to grab off two large tracts of land lying between Redondo and Torrance, according to a byline series of stories by W. D. McGlassen, city editor of the South Bay Daily Breeze.

McGlassen, formerly Major McGlassen who served as public information officer for the 40th Division of the California National Guard overseas, claims that the City Council of Redondo Beach has been "secretly but not too carefully laying a ground work" to grab off the two county territories adjacent to Torrance's western boundary.

Torrance, by being adjacent to the unincorporated territories, could by the same action as is planned by Redondo Beach, annex the areas.

The areas both lie west of Hawthorne Blvd.—one bounded by Torrance and Del Amo Bvds., and the boundary of Redondo Beach, and the other is the El Nido district.

Says McGlassen: "That Torrance won't take the threat to its frontier lying down is a sure bet. With Torrance territory bordering the tract on three sides, its annexation by Redondo Beach would be a constant affront to that city."

Included in the area which Redondo Beach proposes to annex, (assuming McGlassen's information is correct, and there is little reason to challenge his information) there is one school, the El Nido School, which is privately owned, staffed, and maintained by the Torrance Unified School District.

Involved are approximately 2000 acres which could well be zoned for industrial development. At present the area has a scattering population of people and oil wells with the division being about equal.

McGlassen claims that: "Success, which would bring a rich plum to Redondo's tax-hungry treasury, is not beyond reach, either."

Redondo's City Council is holding off action of the annexations until after next Monday. On that date the city council will conduct a hearing on a tract of land which they already have declared they will annex under the Unincorporated Territories Act.

To Hold Off on Special Census

Stating that he was misquoted, City Manager George W. Stevens said Friday he was not going to recommend to the City Council Tuesday night that they authorize a special census.

"Contrary to published reports which were definitely erroneous I am not going to ask for a special census at this time. As a matter of fact I would recommend against the census because I do not believe we have as yet the 40,000 population which we hope a special census will reveal."

Stevens was referring to a news story carried in another local newspaper last Thursday.

Not Gained 8000
"The number of building permits issued since the last census of Jan. 25, 1952, does not indicate we have gained 8000 more in the last 12 months. I soon will have a count of the electric meters installed in the City of Torrance. I am quite certain this number will tally with our present calculations in showing we have not as yet reached the 40,000 mark," he stated.

"However, as soon as there are enough indications that we have reached a population of 40,000 I will ask the council for a special census, but I cannot

Rosary Tonight For Columbia Steel Worker

Rosary for Mariano Cavallaro, 56, an employee of Columbia Steel for the past nine years, will be recited at the Stone and Myers Chapel tonight at 8 o'clock. Mr. Cavallaro died at the Monte Sano Hospital Thursday.

Requiem Mass will be celebrated tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock in the Nativity Catholic Church. Rev. P. J. McGuinness will officiate.

A native of Italy, Mr. Cavallaro had lived here nine years. He leaves his widow, Mrs. Eva Cavallaro, of 2432 Arlington Ave., and four daughters, Mrs. P. Lombardo, Mrs. J. Valone, Mrs. G. Le Pleard, and Mrs. J. Fatta.

Interment will be in Holy Cross Cemetery.

Thomas to Call For Court Bill After Census

Assemblyman Vincent Thomas told the Herald yesterday he would call for a hearing on A.B. 29, a bill creating a municipal court for Torrance, after a special census has been taken which shows the city to have a population of 40,000.

Said Thomas: "There are about ten other bills which have been introduced creating municipal courts; therefore, I feel if one is defeated, it looks as if all will pass."

He indicated that the bill would not be voted upon until the latter part of April.

Meanwhile, hopes of city officials that the city had reached a population of 40,000 tumbled this week as the Southern California Edison Co. revealed the number of electrical meters installed here which in turn when interpreted indicates Torrance to have a population of 35,102.

This reflects a gain of approximately 4000 persons since Jan. 25 a year ago. Thus it does not appear that Torrance will be ready to ask for its court by April since it would mean that the city would have to gain nearly 5000 persons in the next 2 1/2 to 3 months.